

Rep. Wilson Votes to Ensure Equal Pay for Equal Work
Legislation Passed by Democratic Congress will Strengthen Equal Pay Act

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Charlie Wilson (OH-6) today backed a comprehensive measure that will help end the discriminatory practice of paying a woman less than a man for performing the same job. The Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338), approved by a 247 to 178 vote, will strengthen the landmark Equal Pay Act and close the loopholes that have allowed some employers to avoid responsibility for discriminatory pay.

“It is outrageous that in 2008 many women get paid less for performing the same job as men,” said Wilson.

Although the wage gap between men and women has narrowed since the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963, gender-based wage discrimination remains a significant problem for women in the U.S. workforce.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women make just 77 cents for every dollar earned by a man. In addition, African American women only earn 66 cents on the dollar while Hispanic women earn 55 cents on the dollar compared to their male counterparts.

The Institute of Women’s Policy Research concluded that this wage disparity will cost a woman anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million over her lifetime in lost wages.

“That’s a lot of money,” Wilson said. “Think about it. Discriminatory employers aren’t just hurting women, they’re hurting families. This bill helps working families.”

The Paycheck Fairness Act:

- Requires that employers seeking to justify unequal pay bear the burden of proving that its actions are job-related and consistent with a business necessity.
- Prohibits employers from retaliating against employees who share salary information with their co-workers.
- Puts gender-based discrimination sanctions on equal footing with other forms of wage discrimination – such as race, disability or age – by allowing women to sue for compensatory and punitive damages.
- Requires the Department of Labor to enhance outreach and training efforts to work with employers in order to eliminate pay disparities.
- Requires the Department of Labor to continue to collect and disseminate wage information based on gender.
- Creates a new grant program to help strengthen the negotiation skills of girls and women.